

Unemployment in the state was low, about 2.7 percent and we were coming out of the Vietnam experience when there was little inducement to join the program and that many things military did not have a great deal of support among the young people who normally are the individuals who sign up and become members of the National Guard. The committee amendments are to a bill which originally brought to an end, a phased end, this entire program by 1992. Guardsmen objected, saying that they wanted the program to continue and the committee attempted to balance the interests of the guardsmen and the state. What we did was this. We took out the phased ending of the program. Those of you who received letters saying we don't want the credit to come to an end can easily write back and say the credit does not come to an end. Limitations have been put on the credit, but the credit does not sunset in 1992 or at any date. It continues. We did put on a series of limitations and let me tell you what those limitations are. First, we capped the number of people who could take this program at 1,200. Now that's really not much of a cap in that last year 1,169 members of the Guard used the credit. So, all it does is put a top level on it that reflects the kind of usage that's been there for recent years. Secondly, we indicated that people could use this program only during the first ten years of their membership in the Guard. Why? Well, the argument for this credit is to bring people into the National Guard to recruit them because the pay at the beginning level is low. But if you've been into the Guard for ten years, you're easily bringing home \$120, \$150 on a weekend. You also have ten years in towards a pension program and it's quite likely that you are in the Guard for many other economic benefits and reasons besides the credit program. Now, the credit program is very nice for you at that point. It's certainly a nice additional benefit, but it's probably not the reason that you continue to be in the National Guard. So, this is a capping limitation. It will have the effect of knocking some people out from using the program. Who are those people? They are enlisted people who have been in for longer than ten years. Certainly there are some of those people who are now using the credit program and it will no longer be available to them after this bill passes. That's a source of controversy, I'm sure. A third limitation, officers cannot receive the benefits after they have been in for ten years and they can only receive the benefits in their first ten years if it's for a baccalaureate or undergraduate degree. Officers have better pay. They have more opportunity for training. They get excellent experience that allows them a very real credit in the marketplace for their experience and their training and we're